

REMARKS

Upon entry of the Amendment, Claims 1, 3-9 are all the claims pending in the application. Claim 2 has been cancelled. Claims 1, 3 and 4 have been amended. Support for the amendment to Claim 1 is found in the specification, such as on pages 5-6. Claims 3 and 4 have been amended in view of the cancellation of Claim 2. Therefore, no new matter has been added.

Claims 1-5 and 7-8 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as allegedly being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,791,147 to Tanaka *et al.* ("Tanaka '147").

Claims 6 and 9 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as allegedly being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. Tanaka '147 in combination with EP 0 928 805 ("EP '805").

Claims 1-3 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as allegedly being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,918,111 to Tanaka *et al.* ("Tanaka '111").

Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections.

Claim 1 presently recites that the thermally decomposable foaming agent (b-2) is citric acid.

In contrast, Tanaka '147 teaches examples of the blowing agent thereof at column 3, lines 28 to 43. Those examples of the blowing agent include fluorinated aliphatic hydrocarbons, aliphatic hydrocarbons, and decomposable blowing agents. *Id.* The Examples in Tanaka '147 teach using azodicarbonamide and sodium bicarbonate. *See*, col. 4, line 14, to col. 6, line 9. In this regard, Tanaka '147 fails to teach using citric acid as a blowing agent thereof. Applicants respectfully submit that Tanaka '117 fails to motivate a person of ordinary skill in the art to use citric acid.

Further, Tanaka '111 teaches examples of the blowing agent (c) thereof at column 3, lines 27 to 48. Those examples of the blowing agent (c) include fluorinated aliphatic hydrocarbons, aliphatic hydrocarbons, and decomposable blowing agents. *Id.* The Examples of Tanaka '111 teach using azodicarbonamide. *See*, col. 4, line 50, to col. 6, line 2. In this regard, Tanaka '111 fails to teach using citric acid as a blowing agent thereof. Applicants respectfully submit that Tanaka '111 fails to motivate a person of ordinary skill in the art to use citric acid.

EP '805 has been relied upon for its teaching of expanding agents at paragraph [0021]. These expanding agents fail to teach or suggest citric acid. As such, EP '805 fail to make up for the deficiencies of Tanaka '147 and Tanaka '111.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

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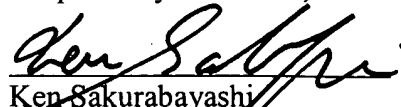
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Respectfully submitted,


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